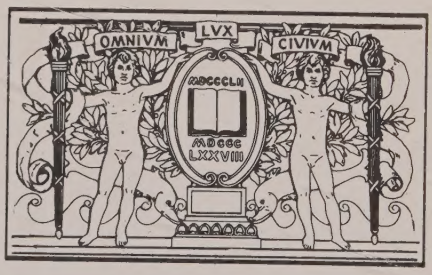
LYRICS

JOHN VANCE CHENEY



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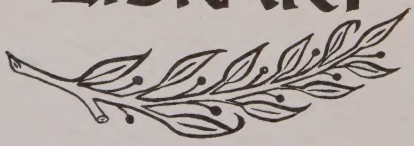

LYRICS

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JOHN VANCE CHENEY

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1901

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TO THE MEMORY
OF
JANET VANCE CHENEY

The pieces in the present volume, not new, are selections from the author's former volumes of verse, now out of print.

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BETWEEN THE ACTS

We act the part allotted; right or wrong,
We robe us, and the prompter's call obey;
Between the acts I sit and pipe away —
Quite unregarded — at an artless song.

AT CANDLE-LIGHTING

I THINK it better to believe,
And be even as the children, they
The children of the early day,
Who let the kindly dream deceive,
And joyed in all the mind may weave
Of dear conceit — better, I say,
To let wild fancy have her way,
To trust her, than to know and grieve.
A poet of old Colophon
A notion held I think was right,
No matter how or whence he gat it:
The stars are snuffed out every dawn,
And newly lighted every night.
I hope to catch the angels at it.

Lyrics

EVENING

I

THE birds have hid, the winds are low,
The brake is awake, the grass aglow:
The bat is the rover,
No bee on the clover,
The day is over,
And evening come.

The heavy beetle spreads her wings,
The toad has the road, the cricket sings:
The bat is the rover,
No bee on the clover,
The day is over,
And evening come.

II

The low winds say,
"Passes day;
Evening is on her way."

The low winds say,
"Sounds, obey;
Colors, fade away."

The winds say on —
Say they on?
No whisper; day is gone.

III

Now is Light, sweet mother, down the west,
With little Song against her breast;
She took him up, all tired with play,
And fondly bore him far away.

While he sleeps, one wanders in his stead,
A fainter glory round her head;
She follows happy waters after,
Leaving behind low, rippling laughter.

IV

The bird is silent overhead,
The beast has laid him down;
The neighbored marbles watch the dead,
The steeple guards the town.

The south winds feel their doubtful course
Toward sweet in thickets found;
The low leaves voice the faltering force
'Twixt silentness and sound.

TO A HUMMING-BIRD

VOYAGER on golden air,
Type of all that 's fleet and fair,
Incarnate gem,
Live diadem!
Stay, forget lost Paradise,
Star-bird fallen from happy skies. —

Vanished! Earth is not his home.
Onward, onward must he roam,
Swift passion-thought,
In rapture wrought;
Issue of the soul's desire,
Plumed with beauty and with fire.

SNOWFLAKES

FALLING all the night-time,
Falling all the day,
Silent into silence,
From the far-away;

Stilly host unnumbered,
All the night and day
Falling, falling, falling,
From the far-away,—

Never came like glory
To the fields and trees,
Never summer blossoms
Thick and white as these.

Falling all the night-time,
Falling all the day,
Follow, follow, follow,
Fold it soft away;

Folding, folding, folding,
Fold the world away,
Souls of flowers drifting
Down the winter day.

THE MUSIC OF NATURE

THE song of Nature is forever,
Her joyous voices falter never;
On hill and valley, near and far,
Attendant her musicians are.

From waterbrook or forest tree
For aye comes gentle melody;
The very air is music blent,
A universal instrument.

When hushed are bird and brook and wind,
Then silence will some measure find,
Still sweeter; as a memory
Is sweeter than the things that be.

A POET OF THE BOUGH

THERE is no tint on ground,
No blissful hue above,
He will not turn to perfect sound,
The voice of joy and love.

Rules are but foolish things,
As dust and ashes, art;
The very shimmer of his wings
Is kindled at his heart.

SPRING SONG

WHEN to pool and log
Come newt and frog,
And the first blade peers at the snowdrift's edge,
And there 's dreamy green along the hedge;

When strange winds screech
In the flapping beech,
And there 's lift of mist from hollow and knoll,
And a fuzzy cub in the fox's hole;

When sleeps no seed,
And peeps the weed,
And clouds go shouldering up the pass,
And mice are astir in the matted grass;

When bats quit the wall,
And gnats the gall,
And there 's shaking of tassels and drift of rain,
And sunshine and shadow, and sunshine again;

Then, Daphnis, blow,
And let Love know;
Level your flute by the bluebird's bill,
Bring your heart to your lips and blow
with a will.

THE COMING OF THE ROSES

ON the south winds a flurry;
The slow clouds hurry,
The blue looks knowing.
There is coming and going
Of voices and wings and feet;
There is bringing and mixing of sweet,
Of the tenderest hues
That the deft hours use;
There is peering of happy faces
From secret, shadowy places.
The fluters of June
Blow a blissful tune;
On the leaves but the gleam
And the tremble of dream;
The gate of the sun-god closes.
But, all alone, will Love toil on,
Labor she will till the dark be gone;
And to-morrow there'll be roses.

FANCY'S SONG

HEAR fancy's song;
The warm day long,
Like her melody
No other sound may be;
Not the luscious croon
Of sunny noon,
Not the lullaby
When the day winds die,
And the flowers rest
On the meadow's breast,
And the stopt clouds lie
White asleep
In the deep
Of the silent sky.

Hear fancy's song;
The warm night long,
So sweet her melody,
For her dear sake
The roses wake,
And the pale waves lie and glisten,
And the quiet sea-shells listen,
Nor sing any more of the sea.

TO-MORROW

MAKE sure, thought. Is there wind in the bough,
The little warm weeds, are they swinging now?
Can you see anywhere a shining of wings,
Or is it yourself that shines and sings?

Why is it so hard to hold to the ground?
Why would I float off on the sea of sound?
Deep in the wood and down by the brook,
Hither and thither listen and look.

Make sure; for to-morrow I mean to say
What I or another can 't, to-day:
Sift the things that are from the things that seem,
Say what is real and what is dream.

MY CHOICE

I WOULD rather be
In the shade of a tree,
With a song and a handful of daisies,
Than the darling of victory
'Mid the bray of the rabble's praises.

I would rather ride,
On the wings inside,
Whither hoofs and horns come not after,
Than take to me Fame for a bride,
Rouged Fame, with her leer and her laughter.

EVERY ONE TO HIS OWN WAY

OAK leaves are big as the mouse's ear,
So, farmer, go plant. But the frost —
Beware! the witch o' the year,
See that her palm be crossed.
The bee is abroad, and the ant,
Spider is busy; ho, farmer, go plant.

The winds blow soft from the glazy sea,
So, merchant, rig ship. But the wave —
Beware! salt water can be
A highway, can be a grave.
Bring silks for milady; a trip
For wines and spices; ho, merchant, rig ship.

I heard round oath at the churchyard door,
So, preacher, go preach. But the Book —
Say yea and nay, and no more;
Look to the wording, look.
A heaven and a hell within reach,
'T is one or the other; good preacher, go preach.

Farmer, go till; ride, merchant, the sea;
Good preacher, have at the mewed folk:
From frost and storm be you free,
And spared That Old Serpent's joke.
I' ll sit in my doorway, God please,
Quietly looking between the green trees.

THE INFORMAL COURTIER

COURTIER, in unpretending dress
Of all-excelling idleness,
No liegeman struts that can outshine
Me, in this good old garb of mine.

Young whirlwinds always ask me where
They turn round dances in the air;
And I am masker on the green
When firefly lanterns light the scene.

The squirrel, sharp in tooth and eye,
Salutes me as I saunter by;
Yes, ere the robin starts her nest
She asks which bough I think the best.

Oft am I hid with bats at noon,
Abroad with owls at rise of moon;
With wary hare and sleeky mole
I am the same congenial soul.

I take the breezes by the arm,
And tramp at will my neighbor's farm;
Herself I serve, without a care,
Her Highness of the Open Air.

GOD BACCHUS

COME out into the summertide;
Time, now, God Bacchus took his ride.
Come out! his hoofed and shaggy crew
Soon dash these good home-bushes through.

There, by the birch with spicy twigging,
Will old Silenus fall a-swigging;
While in yon space, by Zephyr fanned,
The dryads trip it, hand in hand.

The vine, the ivy and the rose —
Who swears by these God Bacchus knows.
The faun folk 'gin to blow; they play
The happy dancers up this way.

Come out; ere day grow any older,
A nymph's trim ankle, a white shoulder!
Come out, come out — ha! there they be,
The whole gay rout of Arcady!

GREAT IS TO-DAY

OUT on a world that has run to weed!
The great tall corn is still strong in his seed;
Plant her breast with laughter, put song in your toil,
The heart is still young in the old mother-soil:
There 's sunshine and bird-song, and red and white clover,
And love lives yet, world under and over.

The light is still white; go sow, and believe!
Clearer dew did not glisten round Adam and Eve,
Never bluer heavens nor greener sod
Since the round world rolled from the hand of God;
The sun still plunges and mounts again,
And the new moons fill when the old moons wane.

Is wisdom dead now Solon's no more?
Are the children done playing at the
Muses' door?
While your Plato, your Shakespeare, goes
down to the tomb,
His brother is stirring in the good mother-
womb;
There's dancing of daisies and running of
brooks,
Ay, life enough left to put in the books.

Out on a world that has run to weed!
The lusty hours, as of old they breed,
And the man child thrives. For your
Jacobs no tears;
They see the Rachels at the end of the
years:
There's waving of wheat, of the tall
strong corn,
And his heart-blood is water who wanders
forlorn.

HASTE, PROPHETS, POETS

HASTE, prophets, poets; we tarry too long
For the call of joy, for the voice of song;
'Tis whistle and shriek in the bleakness, now,
But, by and by, the bird in the bough.

Down the steep of dark rolls the golden car,
Gilding the night with light from afar;
A god's good shoulders loom through the blaze
Round the car of song and gladness of days.

The haughty car, a-smoke on the hill,
They never built that in the clack of the mill;
It stops on the rock of the mountain crown,
And shapes through the flame are stepping down.

THE POET

FAR from the years that make men old,
His dreams, his days, his only gold,
Far from the curse of care,
The darkness of despair,
He lives and weaves, in love's own summer weather,
The golden dreams and golden days together.

Delighting but in visions fair,
Whereso he looks, he finds them there;
Knowing that in the eyes,
The heart, the beauty lies.
He chooses not, but trusts all hours and places,
And takes from each the meed of joys and graces.

From him the June days never go,
For him the roses ever blow,
And bleakest hours that be
Are loud with melody;
He looks, his eye in darkness sightful is;
He leans, his ear can hear the silences.

THE POETS OF OLD ISRAEL

OLD Israel's readers of the stars,
I love them best. Musing, they read,
In embers of the heavenly hearth,
High truths were never learned below.
They asked not of the barren sands,
They questioned not that stretch of death;
But upward from the humble tent
They took the stairway of the hills;
Upward they climbed, bold in their trust,
To pluck the glory of the stars.
Faith falters, knowledge does not know,
Fast, one by one, the phantoms fade;
But that strange light, unwavering, lone,
Grasped from the lowered hand of God,
Abides, quenchless forevermore.

THE HAPPIEST HEART

WHO drives the horses of the sun
Shall lord it but a day;
Better the lowly deed were done,
And kept the humble way.

The rust will find the sword of fame,
The dust will hide the crown;
Ay, none shall nail so high his name
Time will not tear it down.

The happiest heart that ever beat
Was in some quiet breast
That found the common daylight sweet,
And left to Heaven the rest.

CALM

HAST thou been down into the deep of thought
Until the things of time and sense are naught;
Hast sunk — sunk — in that tideless under-deep
Fathoms below the little reach of sleep?

Hast visited below, where he must go
That would the secrecies of being know?
Hast been a guest where, lost to smiles and tears,
The quiet eye looks on beyond the years?

Hast thou been down into the deep of thought
Beloved of prophets, where their work is wrought?
Then doubt is whelmed in hope, and care in calm,
The tumult melts in music of a psalm.

TEARS

NOT in the time of pleasure
Hope doth set her bow;
But in the sky of sorrow,
Over the vale of woe.

Through gloom and shadow look we
On beyond the years:
The soul would have no rainbow
Had the eyes no tears.

THE FLOWER OF SORROW

SUMMER comes and summer goes,
But all months of all years
There is falling of tears;
Summer comes and summer goes,
All hours are grief's, and the sower sows:
To-day and to-morrow
The Flower of Sorrow
Buds and blows.

"THE BEECHES BRIGHTEN"

THE beeches brighten for young May,
And young grass shines along her way;
Joy bares for her his sunny head,
Leaned over brook and blossom-bed;
The smell of Spring fills all the air,
And wooing birds make music there.
There 's naught of sound or sight to grieve,
From quiring morn to quiet eve;
Naught but the shadow thought will cast,—
This loveliness, it cannot last.
The merry field, the ringing bough,
Will silent be as voiceful, now;
Chill, warning winds will hither roam,
The Summer's children hasten home;
That blue solicitude of sky
Bent over beauty doomed to die,
Ere long will, pitying, witness here,
The yielded glory of the year.

TO HOPE

AH, Hope, no more!
From your sweet, false art
Set free my heart;
For I know that the flake will follow
On the airy way of the swallow,
That the drift will lie where the lily blows,
And the icicle hang from the stem of the rose:
O Hope — no more!

Nay, Hope, once more!
With your olden smile
Once more beguile;
Though I know that the flake must follow
On the airy way of the swallow,
That the drift must lie where the lily blows,
And the icicle hang from the stem of the rose:
O Hope — once more!

TO THE FALL WIND

THAT I might borrow your voice, Fall Wind,
To utter the sorrow of human kind;
To speak for speechless tears,
For the hopes and fears
Of the weariful years!

That you might lend me your voice, Fall Wind,
To tell of the sorrow of human kind;
Fall Wind, your voice to grieve
For the hopes that deceive
And the hearts that believe!

"I NEED NOT HEAR"

I NEED not hear the moan they make,
The winds on hill and shore;
I need not hear the hearts that break
For joys that are no more.

Call not, O naked, wailing Fall,
O man's unhappy race!
One drifting leaf, it tells me all,
'T is all in one pale face.

SONG OF THE SLEEPERS

THE mold is our mother,
She will trust no other;
Upon her breast
Her children rest.

Never another
Kind as our mother.
With the gift of years
For joy and for tears,
Is a richer, she saith, —
The gift of death.

Never another
Fond as our mother.
To her promise fast,
She calls at last;
She softly calls,
And the darkness falls.

The mold is our mother,
We have no other;
Upon her breast
Her children rest.

TO FAITH

BESIDE thy gracious hearth content I stay,
Or with thee fate's appointed journey go;
I lean upon thee when my step is slow,
I wrap me with thee in the naked day.

With thee, no loneliness, no pathless way,
The wind is heaven's, to take as it shall blow;
More than thy voice, thy hand, I need not know;
I may not murmur, for I shall not stray.

YESTERDAY

LORN yesterday
Came back to say,
"Let me a shadow be,
A shade, if nothing more,
To follow faithfully
The days that go before."

I could but say,
"Sweet, have your way";
And so the gone day clings.
Since pleasures are too few,
Why lose the old sweet things,
Though sweeter prove the new?

LITTLE JUMP FOR JOY

I HAD a playmate when a boy,
His name was little Jump for Joy;
When I was seven he, too, was seven,
He said that he was born in Heaven.

His yellow hair was very curly,
We were together late and early;
I thought, at least in summer weather,
We two should always be together.

But on a day long long ago,
He left me — how, I hardly know;
Much as the sunlight leaves the day,
He shook his locks, and slipt away.

FRIENDS THAT FAIL ME NOT

WHILE grays of daybreak on the water lie,
And lilac levels vein the western sky,
While grass and flowers and trees and winds and birds
Keep the old fair colors, forms, the old sweet words,
I shall not fear the vexing of the years,
Nor make my dwelling in the place of tears.

Having the happy babble of the rill,
The great protective presence of the hill,
Having the flower the rude March troopers rouse,
The patient, thoughtful stoop of agèd boughs, —
And shall I want or counsellor or mate
To foil the plots and sophistries of fate?

Nor am I fain to wander far away;
In one accustomed spot content to stay,

Enough for me to greet the lives that
come,
Unasked, into my simple, open home, —
The lives that come and go, the same yet
not
The same, the fellows of man's natural
lot.

That shyest traveller, the wilding vine,
The sudden herb facing its first sunshine,
The half-heard murmurs of the early leaves,
The dreams the fancy of young April
weaves —
My heart sets out with these, and on it
goes,
Rejoicing, happy wafted toward the snows.

THE GRACE OF THE GROUND

I

TO-DAY I stretch me on the shadowed grass,
And hear my heart say yet again to me,
Fly with the birds, and let the spent world be.
Float, float, it says, with lightest things that pass,
Leap with the gauze-winged vaulters; glass to glass,
Drink with the bees; go with the gentle throng
Deep ever, lost, in revel sweet and long,
The nearest, happiest children Nature has.
And once again I quit the wanton round
Of mockery, straight betake me to the ground.

II

Wherever a green blade looks up,
A leaf lisps mystery,

Whereso a blossom holds its cup,
A mist rings land or sea,
Wherever voice doth utter sound
Or silence make her round, —
There worship ; it is holy ground.

A WISH

ONE slowly toils his way to fame,
And wins, well earned, an envied name;
One vaults into eternity,—
Got of the gods, strong-limbed is he.

When my poor self is laid away,
I would the shepherd boy might say
(Tuning his pipe less merrily),
"A bough turns sere in Arcady."

MY CHILDREN

DEAR buds of flesh and blood,
So dear, so dear to me,
I dread the thoughts that dwell
Upon the years to be.

More kind the early blight
Than are the ripening suns;
To blossom is to fall,
My sweet, unfolding ones.

"Only the children's hearts
Go down, unhurt, to rest"!
I hear the voice, and hold
You closer to my breast.

WHITHER?

WHITHER leads this pathway, little one? —
It runs just on and on, is never done.

Whither leads this pathway, mistress fair? —
That path to town, sir; to the village square.

Whither leads this pathway, father old? —
To the white quiet of the churchyard fold.

THE WAY OF LIFE

A SOLDIER answered, "Bid the battle bray,
Woo me with music of the fray."

A boy laid by his playthings,— "Mother dear,
I soon can help; another year."

A maiden gazed into the great night sky,—
"Yes, God will send him by and by."

Steadfast, along the way of life they passed:
A soft voice drowned the trumpet-blast,

The child — a little stone, on it his name,
The maiden's lover never came.

THE PILGRIMS

"WHITHER, pilgrims, whither bound,
Passing slowly with no sound?"
One by one they journey by,
Gliding, gliding silently;
Slowly, slowly, dim and gray,
Hold they on their ghostly way.

"Hither, children, making May
Of the solemn autumn day;
Who were they but now went by
While the dead weeds gave a sigh?
Who the pilgrims, dim and gray,
Stopt, and looked upon your play?"

"We have wandered many hours,
Here where some one hides the flowers;
We heard laughter in the grass,
But we saw no pilgrim pass."
Whispers one — pale-cheeked is she —
"Shapes went by; they beckoned me."

THE WIND

'TIS told, long years ago
"The wind," a maiden cried,
"Bespeak him merry wedding";
That night the maiden died.

The wind had won her spirit,
Bride of the wind was she;
And every breath blew sweet,
The air grew melody.

O wondrous, wondrous night
For wind and spirit fair:
The moon, the stars, the music,
The bliss of the bridal pair!

A life may all be lived
Betwixt the dark and dawn;
But pray for him that wakens
To find it lived and gone.

A band of angels came,
And bore the soul away;
On wings no wind may follow
They fled at break of day.

The lonely, homeless wind,
He roves, bemoaning sore:
The soul! he seeks her, roaming,
Moaning, evermore.

THE BODY AND THE SOUL

I

PURE spirit, pure and strangely beautiful,
What body fled'st thou? Where in all this dull,
Unlovely world was there such loveliness
That thou couldst wear it for thy fleshly dress?

Before this hour thou mnst have looked on me;
As men look on old friends I look on thee.

It cannot be. Far-wandering music blown
From heaven thy voice is. In what garden grown
Wert thou, too lovely blossom, in what vale?
Who wert thou ere the flushing cheek fell pale?

The quick winds change, and change the fields and sky;
Look well, thou mayest know me by and by.

II

What hate dispatched thee out of Hell
To mock me? Shapeless, smoky mass,
Thou hideous mist, I curse thee: pass!

Time was when I was welcome to thy breast;
I knew it as the wild bird knows her nest.

Thou liest! never on *that* fell
The sight that took not instant blight.
Pass! pass! blot on God's light!

Ay, through the portal whence this hour I
stole;
Open thy breast to me, take back thy soul.

TO THE BITTER END

HE shed no tears, he made no moan;
He bore his burden; mute, endured
the years,
Eating his bread as it were not a stone:
He murmured not nor faltered, shed no
tears.

He toiled with neither hope nor plan;
Ambition masked in tame humility
That yokes for equal draught the ox with
man,
None heard him speak again of what
might be.

Not once from him a craven cry;
Patient as are the cattle of the stall,
Dumb as the tumbled clods that on him
lie,
So patient, dumb, he toiled, so did he fall.

THE IMMORTALITY OF MIGHT

THE brazen gate, the tower proud,
And haughty wall are as the cloud;
Kings, kingdoms — as a dream they pass,
They are as wind-waves on the grass.

Passes the last remembrancer
To tell us that the mighty were;
In death's one trench shall Shakespeare lie,
The common night close Cæsar's eye.

Believe it not. Once might has birth,
It dwells forever in the earth.
Does glory flame, there Shakespeare is;
Cæsar strives yet — that wreath is his.

INSANE

MY darling hopes went sailing on a summer sea,
All in a shining boat they sailed away from me.

O, then this hair was brown; O, then this face was fair;
The boat danced up and down like a leaf upon the air.

O, then these eyes were bright, bright as the pebbles be;
They saw the black fiend fly, a-scowling on the sea.

White as these hairs are white, the white foam came ashore;
The black fiend laughed outright! My darlings come no more.

"TO DUSTY NOTHING"

WOULDST thou the kingliest head of old renown?
The desert cubs toy with his tumbled crown.

Wouldst thou the proudest fane of Greece or Rome?
Sand and the wild-beast foot are on its dome.

The sum and top of grandeur and of grace,
Mark them, — yon blots upon the great gray face.

THE DARKENED COUNSEL

UNWAVERING Death! He dreadful seems, indeed;
But we hear not from those that know him best.
Perchance to them, the many, he gives rest
Not only, but all joys. Maybe we read
His darkened counsel wrongly, and so bleed,
Self-wounded. All obeying his behest,
How large and kind his heart if they be blest!

MUSIC

TAKE of the maiden's, of the mother's sigh,
Of childhood's dream, the hope and peace that bless
Old age; take of the lover's kiss, caress,
Of light it kindles in the loved-one's eye;
Of June's long shadows, Autumn's evenning sky,
Of roses, of the south wind's tenderness,
Of stars that burn through pine-tops, sprays that tress
The willow-banks where brooks run stillest by;
Take of the blissful lisping of young Spring,
Take of the last faint, pleading grief of Fall,
Of joy and woe that sleep and waking bring, —
The costliest offerings of the great, the small;
Now, pour into the empty soul each thing,
And let the Finger touch that moveth all.

THE FIRST DAWN

HE that engenders had called forth the world;
The mist, ingathered from the vast of space,
Together drawn, had fashioned a great face
Of vale and mountain, tree, and river curled.
Of all the leaves and flowers was none unfurled,
No bird had song, no voice the giant race
Of beasts; for darkness held her ancient place,
The day-god's bolt glowed in his hand, unhurled.
But eastward, now, dream-colors, faint and far,
Foretold to those first lives the end of night,
And from black silence all leapt up as one;
The mother-dark, with neither moon nor star,
Was thick with wild eyes looking for the light,
And throats of thunder for the coming sun.

THE DEATH OF ADAM

'TWAS Adam at the gates of Paradise;
Sick with the world's first sickness, prostrate, pale,
Low lay he, in his pain. And they made wail
That stood by him: "O father, dim your eyes
And filmed, on your great limbs you cannot rise!
Across the heavens black cloud-wings reach and sail,
And prowling shadow crouches in the vale.
What burden, father, on the hurt earth lies?"
"I hunger, wife and children, for the bough
Whereof I ate. Go thou, swift-footed Seth,
And pluck from that sweet tree." — With eyes mist-dim
He looked on it. "Nay, wife, nay, children, now
Is here the one He spake of to me, — Death;
With hollow voice he bids me follow him."

THE PASSING OF THE QUEEN

(JANUARY 22, 1901)

ANSWER the cabin and the hunting-shed
The voice of mourning in the royal halls;
The shadow crawls upon the crownèd head,
From out her palsied hand the sceptre falls.
So. Wrap her in the banner from her walls;
The word of sorrow, why should it be said?
Hark! up and down the earth gray honor calls,.
And the long glories gather round her bed.
Through all the years her people have been fed,
Yea, the wild ox has fatted in her stalls;
To islands of the sea her lines have spread,
Proud sons of song have sung her madrigals.
Come, robe her not in white, and stand and weep;
Wrap round the banner-fold, and let her sleep.

THE VOICE OF THE MOUNTAIN

LOW at my feet is stretched the lordly vale;
Across my realm the high wild stars are led;
My garment is the light, the darkness dread;
I wrap me round with rain and snow and hail.
Round me and round the eagles nest and sail;
Between my knees the thunders make their bed;
I lap the storm-winds, and their young are bred,
Their young that play, and chafe my rocky mail.
Who cometh up to me, he shall have power,
The prophet's power, the old law-giver's might,
Ay, he shall have the tablet in his hand.
He shall not fall, but in the evil hour
And good, uplifted, clothed upon with light,
His neck unbowed, as I stand shall he stand.

GROWN OLD WITH NATURE

IF true there be another, better land,
A fairer than this humble mother-shore,
Hoping to meet the dear ones gone before,
I fain would go. But may no angel hand
Lead on so far along the shining sand,
So wide within the everlasting door,
All lost will be this good green world. *No more*
Of Earth! Let me not hear that dread command.
Then must I mourn, unsoothed by harps of gold,
Mourn for the boughs, the birds, which taught me song,
Mourn for the nightfall on the forest fold;
Yea, must bemoan, amid the joyous throng,
The early loves. The heart that has grown old
With Nature cannot, happy, leave her long.

TWO FRIENDS

I HONOR him who needs must chop the stone,
Must pluck the root up, murder beast and bird,
Then label with a very butcher's word
The bleeding pieces. Though he build his throne
On brittle stalks and hollow carcass-bone,
Still by a princely purpose is he stirred;
And such his thirst for knowledge long deferred,
Kind Nature counts him in among her own.
But him I love the Muses make their care,
Leading his feet wherever he may go,
To spell the gentle magic of the air,
Of olden boughs and darkest brooks that flow.
He has my heart; for perfect things and fair
He finds, and leaves them fairer than they grow.

KING COLD

PROCLAIM it, winds, — was never king
but me;
Blaze it, and say the king is on his throne,
His lords about him. — Rouse, lords, you
mine own;
Up, great of heart! your king, a king
is he,
And now the topmost hour of royalty. —
Off, minions! probe your deepest — to
the bone;
The hill oaks, twist them; while they grind
and groan,
Set foaming all the mad mouths by the sea.
Rake, strip the vales. Smite harder there
by half;
There do the men things dwell which
never bring
Me cheer. — Lords, come, a hollowful we
quaff,
Then for a roaring stave. Hey, drink and
sing,
The world's last window, rack it with
your laugh:
Ha, ha, but it is good to be a king!

A MAY-DAY DANDELION

THE witchery busy up and down the air!
Deep in the spruce, which loved to hold the snow
On his plump shoulders but a month ago,
The warm winds gossip; tell how here and there
A bloodroot ventures, how the elders dare,
And little dogwood, how the maples blow,
The knowing elms have leaves or something so
Like leaves to closer look they do not care.
The bluebird, robin, sparrow, blackbird, too,
They have a word about. No item sweet
To miss, they lisp the roll of beauty through.
True gossips! letting slip the thing most meet
For wonder. Here it is, dropt from the blue
This very morn, — the love-star at my feet.

AUGUST

MUTE the ferny woodland ways,
Hushed the merry meadow-lays;
Stillness all and heavy haze
Of the charmèd August days.
In the hollow, on the steep,
Dwells a silence long and deep;
Not the smallest whisper, now,
Of the secrets of the bough;
In his glory hid, alone,
Sits the hill god on his throne.

PROSPERO OF THE NORTH

YOUNG day has flung his saffron banner out,
And the first beamy spear-tips prick the world.
Straightway my wee ones will I set to work.
The hemlocks listen, the sullen brook runs dark,
Grim joy glows in the bones of the hoar oak;
How strong he is, and shapely! — Hither, chicks!
First, you that know the chambers of the winds,
See that they are all barred; let not a breath
Come forth of them. This done, lay hold, draw up
The sagging cloud that hangs behind yon mount,
And stretch his leaden length from east to west. —
The mild, the social, maples lean this way,
Hearing my words, and the clean beeches clap

Their scattered leaves ; attentive turns the birch,
High-bred and delicate, and right happy nod
The water-loving alders. — Hear, me, chicks!
Soon as the first flake flutters in the calm,
Caught like the thistledown in spider's web,
Get you abroad, and, as the white flowers come,
Consign them to the use of beauty, guide
And stay them through the grave and decent day.
Hark ! we must have unguessed devices wrought ;
Far up and down the unbroken loveliness
Must run so wondrous waves and dimply curves
Heaven shall reshape her clouds, and still despair
To match your magic. Mischiefs, mark me well !
Hood the prim steeple so the silly bell
Shall wag without a sound ; pad soft the rock,
Stuff every hollow, cushion every knoll,
Ay, drape all nakedness to the utmost stretch
Of antic fancy, — bush and shrub and bough

And stump and stub and pole; on fence
and wall
Bring to the task most exquisite caprice;
So fair confusion let wild beauty work
No man will know his own. Away!
Away!

IN WINTER WOODS

THE lisping, flitting of the chickadee,
The challenge from the sentry of the jay,
Quaint tracks that might a lated fairy's be, —
The wind's and wood-thing's wayward broidery,
Branches and boles of during brown and gray,
Grouped evergreens, thin wisp of leaves, which stay
To swing and sing on sturdy shrub or tree —
These know I well; but ah, the dreams that house
Under the quiet, white, snow-burdened boughs!

THE OLD TREE

YON shape, so pitiful, once stood,
The Saul of his tall brotherhood;
Tempest, at last, and length of days,
Have mastered; lo, the king decays.

Time was when gravely to his shade,
At noon, the lordlier cattle strayed;
And from his top, at morn, rang clear
The bravest song of all the year.

He sighs, is silent, sighs again,—
One fate we have, O sons of men!
These empty hands upheld in air,
It is your own last reach of prayer.

SUMMER NOON

THE dust, unlifted, lies as first it lay
When on his dewy path came up the day;

The spider-web stirs not; on seas of air,
The thistle-ship, becalmed, rocks idly there;

The fern-leaves curl, the wild rose sweetness spends
Rich as at eve the honeysuckle lends;

The creeping cattle feed far up the hill,
The blithest birds have hid, the wood is still;

On daisied dials, pointing flower to flower,
The shadow-hands have reached the golden hour.

DANCE OF THE DAISIES

EVERY morning mist upcurled —
Dream-flight of the waking world —,
Every brook that, curving, passes
Lushest juts of tressy grasses,
Every nesting bird that pushes
Smoothest breast between the bushes, —
Perfect poises, grace entrancing;
But have you seen the daisies dancing?

A POET'S LINE

Secure as sweet the honey-cell,
The spider-web is strong;
A poet's line — there's none can tell —
It may live long and long.

QUATRAINS

NATURE

"Men are decayed and studies; she is not."

Nature has tunes yet; never an hour
Falters the music, near or far;
The sweet old sleep-song falls on the flower,
The hymn of the Highest rolls with the star.

SPRING

Bring, bluebird, from the blue above
The song love's heavenly own;
See! hand in hand, come Spring and Love —
Or is it Love alone?

JUNE

The green land blossoms, and the blue skies hover,
The warm winds blow, and the song-birds pair;
Under love's window comes, fluting, the lover,
And the loved one leans, with his rose in her hair.

I WOULDN'T

A sprig of mint by the wayward brook,
A nibble of birch in the wood,
A summer day and love and a book,
And I wouldn't be king if I could.

EARLY MORNING

A webby mead with diamonds set,
Dim, drowsy boughs, dream-burdened yet,
A mist-flock half-way up the steep,
Curled there, rock-folded, still asleep.

SUMMER EVENING

I

The birds all voiceless are,
The singing air is still;
'Tis guard-mount of the star,
Heaven's watch is on the hill.

II

The long, long sorrow on the hill,
The evening grief upon the pine;
Earth murmurs, as a dreamer will,
"Again the measures never mine!"

EVENING WINDS

You tell it, winds, the bliss that swings
The flower, the little leaf;
But ever to the measure clings
The mystery of grief.

THE HERMIT-THRUSH

Holy, Holy! — In the hush
Hearken to the hermit-thrush;
All the air
Is in prayer.

AUTUMN

These colors, memories are they,
The past this beauty wore;
The bright hours dream, bring back the day
But dream may summon more.

NOVEMBER

The brook, slow northward toward the snows,
Bubbling its little trouble, goes;
Lorn branches beckon, strained in space;
Death-pale the field's beseeching face.

"AND GHOSTS BREAK UP THEIR GRAVES"

The dead are up; they take the gale
That rakes the faded mound.
Hark! laughter there! or was it wail?
Life does not know that sound.

THE TREES

I

Men hope and labor and despair,
Laughter they have and sorrow;
The trees their gods' composure wear
To-morrow and to-morrow.

II

The patient pleading of the trees,
Deep it shames the soul's despair;
In supplication, moveless, mute,
They keep their attitude of prayer.

THE VOICE OF THE POOL

Unto the lowly comes the glory far.
I lie here, looking up;
The proud sky fills my cup,
It stoops, and sets upon my breast the star.

WHAT CANST THOU DO?

Since He has hid it from thee, wherefore seek;
Why reach thy thought for it, the secret high?
Know first the warm wind-breath against thy cheek, —
The message of the mystery passing by.

TWO IN THE SUMMERTIDE

The grandsire muses, — "Wind, I hear in thee
The growing murmur of eternity";
She with the rose-mouth smiles and sighs, —"Ah me,
The little leaves coquetting in the tree!"

THE POET

A priest of Heaven, some gracious hour,
Lowered to him chasuble and stole;
He sings a weed — it is a flower,
He sings a star — it is a soul.

BEAUTY AND DREAM

Beauty and Dream, I fled from you, one day,
And down a new path wandered on and on;
Had you not followed softly all the way —
I knowing not — Oh, whither had I gone!

DREAMLAND

The realm of dream, what matter where it is?
Thither the poet goes for melodies,
And wisdom for things better than it knows,
And love when blenched the red is in her rose.

DREAM

Remember that the path of dream
Runs back to ways of men;
After the rapture and the gleam,
The death to wake again!

LOST JOY

Lost Joy, who now is at your side
From morning until eventide;
Who has you softly by the hand,
All up and down the summer land?

THE JOYS FOREVER

The voice of melody outlives the hour,
Nor with the summer dies the summer flower;
Thought walks among the blossoms—none are gone,
Dream hears the music singing, singing on.

THE SKILFUL LISTENER

Who listens well hears Nature, on her round,
When least she thinks it; bird and bough and stream
Not only, but her silences profound,
Surprised by nicer cunning of his dream.

THE VICTOR'S ART

Along all ways the path of triumph lies,
All places own the victor's art, —
To do that greater thing than win the prize,
Lose it, yet keep a happy heart.

RUIN

Toppled the throne, crumbled the kingly hand,
Darkened the chambers, carpeted with sand:
It is good death. Ruin, that 's he unblest,
Gray with the heart-dust in his living breast.

OUR TWO GIFTS

Two gifts God giveth, and He saith,
One shall be forfeit in the strife,
The one no longer needed, — life;
No hand shall take the other, — death.

ERELONG

Homeward ere long it mounts, the stream
That moved the mill;
After the valley toil the dream
Upon the hill.

ETERNITY

Over and over is the lesson taught,
A little time, and all things come to naught.
I watch the cloud-shapes build and cease
to be;
Heart, whence that dream of thine, — eter-
nity?

TEARS

The lips are pallid, parched with woes?
Weep! the fall of tears is not in vain;
In the grass is laughter after rain,
The blush is back upon the rose.

"THE BRIGHT ETERNAL HOUR"

What time the deepest shadows are
Breaks, burns the bright eternal hour;
From the wide dark looks out the star,
From all death's night the April flower.

THY TRUST

But a time for joy and tears,
The dream and then the dust?
If Another's are thy years,
Thine alone thy trust.

DEATH

Fearest the shadow? Keep thy trust;
Still the star-worlds roll.
Fearest death? sayest, "Dust to dust?"
No; say, "Soul to soul!"

THE FALLEN

(In Memoriam, May 30)

I

TOLL the slow bell,
Toll the low bell,
Toll, toll,
Make dole
For them that wrought so well.
Come, come,
With muffled drum
And wailing lorn
Of dolorous horn;
The solemn measure slow
Toll and beat and blow;
Put out all glories that adorn
The sweet, unheeding morn.
Come, come;
To the muffled drum
And the sad horns
Bring flowers for them that took the thorns.

Knell, knell;
Let the slow bell

Be struck and the troubled drum;
Come, come,
The solemn measure slow
Toll and beat and blow;
Rebuke this bright, unpitying light.
The solemn measure slow
Toll and beat and blow
For them our beauty and our might
Gone on the unreturning way,
For them that took the night
That we might have the day.

II

Hark! voices, joyous voices break
From the green martyr-mounds: "Wake, wake!
The Lord our God, once more He saith,
This hand made all — it made not death.
Let the blithe bells ring
And the May air sing;
Strike the quick drum,
Smite sorrow dumb;
Blow the glad horn,
This glad May morn;
Lift the valiant measures high
Of the proud earth and sky
For them that tent
Beyond the firmament,

And on the field of light
Still gather to the fight.

"Blow the glad horn,
This glad May morn;
Stanch, undaunted measures blow,
Gathering courage as they go, —
Valiant measures high
Carolled of earth and sky;
Set the bright, triumphal stave
For them that fought so well,
That faltered not nor fell;
For them and all whereso yon colors wave,
Unto the four winds given
And the proud earth and heaven.
There believe and battle they
Whose face is toward the day,
The ever-living light,
Where is no night,
Where is no death nor shadow of the grave."

"IS THERE ANY WORD FROM THE LORD?"

(Jeremiah xxxvii. 17.)

DAYLONG a craven cry goes up:
"The people drink a bitter cup,
They languish, gathering stones for bread,
Brave faith is fallen, the old hope dead."
The babblers will not cease:
"The people have no peace."

Trust is outworn, naught can be done,
There is no good under the sun,
The blue sky fades, the old faiths fail,
The strong hand shakes, the warriors wail;
Daylong the craven cry,
"The people faint, they die."

Turn to the wall our faces, we
That vanquish air, and earth, and sea!
The sun shines yonder; somewhere glows
The old first hope, bright as it rose,
The hope whose accent high
Shall brand this whining lie.

If doubts, risen idols of the Nile,
Again the hallowed land defile,
Thunder yet clothes green Horeb's crown;
Let Sinai speak, and smite them down.
Life nests yet in the clod,
Israel has still his God.

You, seers and prophets, poets, may
See yet the good gold in the day.
Still red at heart, arise, arise!
Sing back the blue into the skies,
The green into the grass,
And bid the phantoms pass.

Once more, blest messengers, declare
That love still lives, that life is fair;
Say knowledge knows not, trust is all,
And crush these wise which writhe and
crawl;
Wake, wake, your strains of fire!
God 's for us — strike the lyre!

GEORGE WASHINGTON

FIRST of the deedful, giant few,
So high in Freedom's grace he grew,
To-day his voice she leans to hear
Across a hundred noisy year;
The virtues meet in him to vie,
As, in autumn weather,
Sunset colors gather
Down the western sky,
Divulging, ere they pass,
The dyes of which the daylight was.

The lawless gods no more allot
As in old Homer's tales;
According as ourselves have wrought,
So hang the honest scales:
Our brown-haired, blue-eyed Saul
Of battle, stalwart, tall,
Must climb, unstayed,
The heights he made.
August, unfellowed to the last,
From height to height he passed;
The day-star of his race,
He rose, he shone into his place.

The lusty suns wheel on;
The years have come and gone,
Sowing new worth
In the old earth.
Through all the summers but one name
Has blossomed in the field of fame,
All-beautiful, white-leaved, to be
With his, the Father of the Free;
One only dare
We find that fair, —
The name of him against whose breast
Bondage could sob itself to rest.

Stands yet the Father as he stood,
Full statured, great, sublimely good.
Before God's face he wrought;
It cannot come to naught.
As fate's was his right hand;
He built, and it shall stand.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

THE hour was on us; where the man?
The fateful sands unfaltering ran,
And up the way of tears
He came into the years,

Our pastoral captain. Forth he came
As one that answers to his name;
Nor dreamed how high his charge,
His privilege how large, —

To set the stones back in the wall
Lest the divided house should fall.
The shepherd who would keep
The flocks, would fold the sheep,

Humbly he came, yet with the mien
Presaging the immortal scene, —
Some battle of His wars
Who sealeth up the stars.

No flaunting of the banners bold
Borne by the haughty sons of old;
Their blare, their pageantries,
Their goal, — they were not his.

The need comes not without the man;
The prescient hours unceasing ran,
And up the way of tears
He came into the years,

Our pastoral captain, sent to crook
The spear into the pruning-hook,
To toil, untimely sleep
And leave a world to weep.

THE MAN WITH THE HOE

(A Reply to Edwin Markham.)

"Let us a little permit Nature to take her own way; she better understands her own affairs than we." — *Montaigne.*

NATURE reads not our labels, "great" and "small";
Accepts she one and all

Who, striving, win and hold the vacant place:
All are of royal race.

Him, there, rough-cast, with rigid arm and limb,
The Mother molded him,

Of his rude realm ruler and demigod,
Lord of the rock and clod.

With Nature is no "better" and no "worse,"
On this bared head no curse.

Humbled it is and bowed; so is he crowned
Whose kingdom is the ground.

Diverse the burdens on the one stern road
Where bears each back its load;

Varied the toil, but neither high nor low
With pen or sword or hoe,

He that has put out strength, lo, he is strong;
Of him with spade or song

Nature but questions, "This one, shall he stay?"
She answers "Yea" or Nay,"

"Well, ill, he digs, he sings"; and he bides on,
Or shudders, and is gone.

Strength shall he have, the toiler, strength and grace,
So fitted to his place

As he leaned there, an oak where sea winds blow,
Our brother with the hoe.

No blot, no monster, no unsightly thing,
The soil's long-lineaged king;

His changeless realm, he knows it and commands;
Erect enough he stands,

Tall as his toil. Nor does he bow unblest;
Labor he has, and rest.

Need was, need is, and need will ever be
For him and such as he;

Cast for the gap, with gnarlèd arm and limb,
The Mother molded him,

Long wrought, and molded him with mother's care,
Before she set him there.

And aye she gives him, mindful of her own,
Peace of the plant, the stone;

Yea, since above his work he may not rise,
She makes the field his skies.

See! she that bore him, and metes out the lot,
He serves her. Vex him not

To scorn the rock whence he was hewn, the pit
And what was digged from it;

Lest he no more in native virtue stand,
The earth-sword in his hand,

But follow sorry phantoms to and fro,
And let a kingdom go.

THE LAST WORDS OF COLUMBUS

THE far-off, hard and darkened message; ay,
The sovereign utterance but the chosen hear!
A light gleamed, once, upon a distant shore,
Struck from the black of night. 'Twas then spoke first
The voice from out the vast:
Thou dost possess the gateway of the seas.
I heard it yet again: *Peace to his soul*
Who brings the light to them that know it not.
O that I might my life's brief winter day
Draw, softening, onward to the summertide
Of God's long purpose; when his patient thought,
Run on to ripeness, shall have wrought the man
Well out, — the blossom of the prophecies,
The bloom and coronation of my kind!
That people of the better years to be

Will into hard-earned honor lift me up;
Fallen now, forgot of all the thankless world.
Son, I have said; 'tis for your filial heart.
Heaven's gentlest angel write the pity down
And make it clear what old man's words they are!
The hour is come. Now, with strong sailor-trust,
For the last voyage. Stand to sea — to sea!

TO THE LORD OF BATTLES

(Aztecan)

O THOU whom we can neither see nor hear,
Maker of all, the Strong, the Lord of Battles,
Have pity on thy people!
Pilgrims along the hillway and along
The blistered valley where no river is,
Gleaning the barren pastures, Thou must see
Our sorrow. Thou whom we can never see,
Thou canst behold it; it cannot be told.
Thou hast to give of pity; succor us
Who turn this way and that, and cry aloud.
Open thine hand! then, if we know it not,
But turn away and scorn Thee and forget,
Take back thine hand, nor longer hold it out.
Yea, if, once knowing Thee, with mind and heart,

We lean away, then do Thou cast us
off;
But, oh, not knowing Thee, and yet
accursed
As we had known Thee and forgot thy
face,
Shall this thy people's prayer be as the
wind?
Maker of all, the Lord of Battles, hear!
Let us find joy of life, though short the
time
As one may hold the flower before it
wither.
Prove us! we cannot serve Thee till we
know,
We cannot love Thee till we understand.

YÁPPAN

ONE day the Golden Garden, nine heavens high,
Drew not the feet of her for whom it bloomed;
And from the Font to the Tower-Tree of Flowers
The singing dwarfs were mute, bemoaning her
Bound earthward, burning, burning down the noon,
Bright in it as the star is in the dark,
Slid from its place down steeps of summer night:
The Queen of Love was on love's errand gone.
Thrice to and fro she floated by him, there,
Yáppan, upon the Stone of Penitence,
Lean, withered with his fast. Thrice passed she by,
Till through the blackness of his dream shot lines
Of waving fire; and quick, reviving warmth

Went stinging through his veins; and wilding joy,
Long lost, once more was blossoming in his heart.
Then poised she in mid-air, her glittering dimmed,
That he might look on her; a little off
She poised, a little farther than his reach,
And his poor eyes, strained upward long, so long,
Drew down to her. Her own eyes none might see,
But only gleamy mist which downward from
The lashes quivered, and the lowered lids,
Like moonlight at the edges of a cloud.
A time she poised, then flaming, passed him by
Again, then settled dove-wise at his side:
"Yáppan, thou hast had thirst and weariness,
Hunger and cold." And Yáppan dreamed he heard
The voice of her he loved in other days;
He heard and answered as in other days.
While he yet spoke she beckoned him away:
So did the unforgetting soul go forth
Of Yáppan, lover, gathered to the gods.

THE PRAYER OF HOKAN, THE HERMIT

I HAVE not dwelt with men, but walked with thee,
O Mother! followed thee on all thy ways.
It is not gone, the strength thou gavest me;
Youth need not go because of many days.

Try me. These shoulders hold as they were set,
I have it still, that strong, proud step of thine;
My slackened thews are as the lion's yet,
In my still bed Rest lays her thighs to mine.

See, yonder rock is gray; you take him not,
And yon hoar tree puts on his leaves again.
Mother, he merits not the weakling's lot,
He, more than these, and not as other men.

This much may Hokan plead. He makes no moan;
Thy child, he will acquit him as thine own.

THE LAST WORDS OF "GARD, THE GOOD"

BELOVÈD, known for love of peace am I,
From tribe to tribe, wide as the eagles fly;
And I would leave you peace and love of peace,
That it die not with me, about to die.

With envy, strife and anger have no part;
The small sharp word is as the hunter's dart,
With cruel barb, dipt in the juice of death:
Love peace — not many hearts, but all one heart.

HERA IN HER CHAMBER

(The Iliad.)

AND straight she sought her chamber, the chamber planned
And fashioned by her darling son Hephæstus,
Built with the massive doors, and secret bolt
No hand but hers could draw; hither she came,
And entered in, and closed the golden door.
And precious ointment she put on, and laved,
And made her lovely body without stain;
Nor stinted aught the smooth ambrosial oil
Of searching perfume, but one drop of which,
Spilled on the floor where the immortals walk,
Sets wandering sweetest odor up and down
The air throughout the earth and endless heaven.
So did the joy of Zeus exalt her beauty;

Then dressed with her white hands the blessèd hair
Forever flowing from her fragrant head.
And down she took the gown Athene made her,
The pleasant-smelling robe with delicate shapes
A-dancing out and in the shifting film,
And clad her in it, and looped it at the throat
With clasps of gold, and girt her girdle on,
Her belt with many tassels; in her ears
She hung the swinging ear-rings, triple-gemmed,
Alive with fires that flickered every way;
Then over her, down all the splendor, showered
The veil, as of the morning sunbeams woven,
And tied the sandals on her shining feet.

MY SONG

My song, you need be neither long nor loud,
If only love and beauty's own you are;
It is the one breath curls the leaf and cloud,
The one life lights the daisy and the star.

QUATRAINS

MEMORY

I

Would you Love's fairest daughter see,
Look on her, yonder,— Memory;
Hers is that thought-emmarbled grace,
That dream-illumed, averted face.

II

Stiller than where that city lies asleep,
With fabled spires deep in the swinging sea,
Stiller and dimmer than that windless deep
The sad-flowered shadow-field of memory.

BUT ONCE

But once have we chance to take,
And, just with the taking, a heaven make;
But once have we chance to give,
And, just with the giving, a lifetime live.

A HEART-VOICE

"Chance, where thy foot is was a flower,
Chance, on June's fairest grave thou art."
It haunts me all the autumn hour,
That murmur of a murdered heart.

FATE

A sunbeam kissed a river-ripple, — "Aye
Shall live the love 'twixt thee and me!"
In night's wide darkness passed the light
away,
The river mingled with the sea.

SLAIN

War met him and fell pestilence,
Sore toil and want, all the dread foes of
everyday;
These he struck down, then went he hence,
Sent by a soft cat-thing that clawed him
in her play.

TO THE DREGS

Love's lips or the betrayer's kiss,
Drink, nor despair;
The fates mix neither bane nor bliss
Too great to bear.

AT PARTING

When we met, then was the time for tears
To blind us, shut from sight the years.
Now, no tears; there 's naught can hide
the day
When sorrow was so far away.

AT LAST

Life is and love, then neither be;
And surely it is best:
The cold winds find a leafless tree,
The snows an empty nest.

SOMEWHERE

THE weasel thieves in silver suit,
The rabbit runs in gray;
And Pan takes up his frosty flute
To pipe the cold away.

The flocks are folded, boughs are bare,
The salmon take the sea;
And O my fair, would I somewhere
Might house my heart with thee!

MY CASTLE IN THE AIR

OR in the East or in the West,
Where shall I build my bird a nest?
Northward or southward, whither roam
To build my little love a home?

Up yonder, in the clean, sweet air,
I think that I could keep her, there,
Too much an angel for the ground,
For heaven somewhat too warm and round.

MY SHEPHERDESS

SHE lives, she lives up in the hills,
Where mists and eagles are;
Blithe shepherdess of rocks and rills,
'Twixt mortal and a star.

Of acorns is her necklace made,
And reddest berries found;
While slender vines, in glossy braid,
About her brow are bound.

No fairy foots it half so light,
A-dancing on the green;
Nor curls a sunny cloud so bright,
The pines and sky between.

My shepherdess of rocks and rills!
We dwell the world above;
She lives and loves up in the hills,
And I live in her love.

LOVE IS EVERYWHERE

LOVE, you are far away,
But love is everywhere;
My Love, be where she may,
Where she is I am there.
Whether
Together
Or apart,
I fold you, Love,
I hold you, Love,
Hard to my heart.

TO TREE-CRICKETS

CONSTANT mites that briskly whip
One measure over and over,
How like you are, a-harping there,
The larger sort of lover.

Scratch-scratch, scratch-scratch, all the night,
You twang it, brave and cheery;
One jerky stave, the whole night long,—
Deary — Deary — Deary.

High the moon rides, high and clear,
The filling dewdrops glisten;
Thrum, plucky lovers! well I know
Your little ladies listen.

Stick to 't wooers! So will I,
Nor ever slightest vary
The one sweet word of all the world,—
Mary — Mary — Mary.

HELEN

THE shadows fold; come back as of old,
Shine, Helen, girl with the head of gold.
As the moon from the sky overcast
Bursts into the open blue,
Out of the cloudy past
Push your bright body through.

The shadows fold; come back as of old,
Once more glow over me, head of gold.
Burn back to your place on high,
Flame, there, for my heart to see;
O Helen, my youth's blue sky,
The heaven you made for me!

"LED LIKE THE PALE WILD DOVE"

LED like the pale wild dove,
On quiet ways alone,
Up and down the Land of Love —
Hear her moan, oh, hear her moan!

The world, it nothing hears —
Hearing, it would not know;
But it brought her all the tears,
Gave the wounds that hurt her so.

ON THE WAYS OF NIGHT

WHO did it, Fall Wind, sighing?
Who struck her cheek so white?
Why gathers she wild leaves flying
On the ways of night?

The unpitying, bitter weather!
Ere moon and stars be dead
Blow yellow leaves together,
Make the maid a bed.

THE BEAUTEOUS BODY DEAD

THE face a flower, the golden head
Unspotted as a star,
Upon this beauteous body dead
There is nor stain nor scar.

Though none may find it, 't was a wound;
That death the soldier dies:
The bravest on love's battle-ground,
She fairest on it lies.

FATE'S TABLET

I

YOU must have known her had you seen her face,
That moment turned away, as by she passed;
It must have told you, that confiding grace,
Of one could not but love you to the last.

And had you heard her voice you must have known.
She little talked and softly all that day;
Something, perhaps, was on the June wind blown
To her could not but love you aye and aye.

You did not see her, and you did not hear,
She saw not, heard not, you as by she passed;
And it once more was written, *Year to year*
Two shall go, seeking, seeking to the last.

II

The eye may glow, the face grow fair,
And two shall look — lo, Love is there!
Two shall seek not and they shall find.

The eye may dim, the cheek grow pale,
With searching; 't is of none avail.
Yea, two shall seek and shall not find.

DREAM AND A DAY

HOW many happy summers yet,
How many times the bird, the rose,
Ere 't is to sleep and to forget?
There's never a heart that knows.

How oft shall come the summer weather
Along the fields, the greenwood way,
And lover and loved one be together?
There's never a heart can say.

And ever a heart why should it say?
What would love have of joy or sorrow?
Love, with its dream, its dream and a day,
Has never a thought for the morrow.

THE LOST LAMB

MY heart, you happy wandered
Along the sunny hill,
All day a-singing, singing,
As the happy shepherd will.

The friendly blue of heaven
Looked on you from above;
'Twas joyance all for the shepherd
And the little lambs of love.

Oh, when the shadows gathered,
And the damp upon the rock,
Heart, heart, poor silly shepherd,
Why did you count the flock!

TAKE THOU AND GIVE

LOVE-EYED, look upward, downward,
round and round,
For rarest, fairest things of air and ground;
From earth to sky, search everywhither,
And bring the willing beauties hither,
Where song may tongue them;
Then what love gives to thee
Give again to me,
Thyself among them.

AT PARTING

WITH tears and kisses let me go.
Love not too deep
To kiss and weep,
That love have many, many;
But one love, oh,
It doth not so!
Pale lips it has and tearless eyes;
Broken, motionless it lies,
A flower amid death's mysteries,
A rose that dies.
With tears and kisses let me go;
Such love have many, many.
That other love my heart would know,
Or know not any.

LOVE'S LOVER

"WISE Love," I asked, "what joy is yet to be?"
"Kindled at morn the beauties are
That burn in evening's early star."
I asked, and so Love answered me.

I asked, and once again Love answered me:
"To piteous Autumn-measures cling
Remembered melodies of Spring —
Love's lover is a memory."

THE MYSTIC KINSHIP

NOT a thing that lives and moves
But the mystic kinship proves;
In the deep, the blue above,
All the mid-air ways along —
Hark! the same eternal song
Singing on the lips of Love.

Purl of stream and twirl of leaf —
There the voice of joy and grief,
Love's divine, undying art.
Waving grass and swaying tree,
Swinging of the star and sea —
'T is the beating of thy heart.

THE LOVES OF NATURE

THE love-dews find the daisy-heart, and fill
Love's cup; the love-mists ring the morning hill;

The love-light to the dusk gives up its gold;
The winds fall not till all sweet love be told;

Yea, that bright sound does on the silence lie
To darken in the love-arms, and so die.

WE MAY LOVE

FROM the withered, bitter ground
Every sweet has taken leave?
Joy, there 's none of sight or sound,
Naught to do but sit and grieve?
Look — the blue! bent close above,
Close above;
While it hovers we may love,
We may love.

WHEN LOVE COMES

HAST seen the morn with first light
'twixt his lids,
And, at the playing of the katydids,
The day turn nightward, softly on and on
Slip by, yet none dare say that he was
gone?
Hast seen the dream-shapes, pale with
winter yet,
Warming wood-spaces for the violet?
Hast heard the spring-song on the wild
March air,
And all the world's a lover listening there;
The lay the little wood-bird long did keep
Only, at last, to sing it in his sleep?
Hast heard the brook, where heavy shadows
are,
Bubble new sweet up to the evening star?
Not yet thou knowest beauty, melody;
They wait the day Love comes and speaks
to thee.

THE CUP OF BLISS

THE reddest rose, the bluest violet,
Take them and bray them in a golden jar,
Drip in the clearest dewdrops; nor forget
Some faintest scent from where old shadows are,
Nor the night-laughter where the brook is loud,
Nor that far voice when all the silence grieves;
Stir these with motion of the softest cloud,

Of winds that run along the sunny leaves.
The last, add glances of the moonlit stream,
Pink tremblings from the edges of the dawn,
A dash of rapture only youth dare dream,
And the dear pang it leaves when it is gone.
Pour, now, and drink. Is it the cup of bliss?
Thou canst not, then, remember love's first kiss.

THE WAY TO TELL

THE way to tell how well I love you,
Dear?
Ask any of the gossip winds that blow,
The thousand flowers that burn it where they glow;
Ask all the things that love's close secret hear;
Inquire of sound and silence far and near,
Of brooks that sing it or must cease to flow,—
All ministers of love above, below.
Their answer, Sweet — of that I have no fear;
For I believe all life below, above,
Is leagued with love as light is with the day,
That heaven and earth aye take the lover's part.
But should all other voices mock my love,
You will not heed them; you will turn away,
Content to have the answer of your heart.

NAMELESS

SHALT thou be beauty's dream, her sweetest thought?
No; thought scarce is ere it is not.

And dare I make thee love's low melody?
Nay; silence, then no more of thee.

Shalt thou be morning, wonder of the light?
No; light, then shadow of the night.

And art thou summer's red, unrivalled rose?
Not that — love knows how soon it goes.

HOW DAREST THOU WAIT?

LIQUID as lies the wave the hilltop lies,
The rocks are mobile as the breeze that strays
Past them to twirl the dust on summer ways;

The stars, they have the flight of butterflies,
The sun is as the ember in the grate:
Once more I cry, Love me! How darest thou wait?

ONE

I

ONE whitest lily, reddest rose,
None other such the summer knows;
Of bird or brook one perfect tune,
And sung is all the sweet of June.

Once come and gone, the one dear face,
Forever empty is its place;
But one far voice the lover hears,
Calling across the waste of years.

II

One lived whose wont it was, at even-
tide,
To lean upon a hoar rock's lichened side;
There would her eyes look softness through
the vast,
Like moonlight in deep forest — lost, at
last.

Her heart could open but to glories high,
Could blossom only unto love's pure sky;
She came, and leaned, and dreamed; and never day
Knows, now, the light that went with her away.

THE DARKENED DAY

SHE rises to me from the morning sea,
Sunsets and stars bring back her face to me;

I find her when my lone thought wanders far,
Beyond the gleamy reach of sun and star;

Where never winds or waters laugh or moan,
I hear her voice; it is the olden tone.

All quiet beauties of the day and night
Give her again to hearing and to sight;

But when the day returns she fled the years,
Then am I deaf with grief, death-blind with tears.

LOVE AND GRIEF

WOULDST hear strange music only the dreamer knows,
Breath sweeter than breathing of winds that have been with the rose?

Wouldst see strange light that deep in the shadow plays,
Wouldst pluck the secret from out the heart of the days?

Then follow Love and that other who feeds on her sweet;
Yea, follow Love and Grief, and fall low at their feet.

THE WHITE TOWER

BUILT in my dream, a white tower rose,
And she, the light of it, a new soul, freed
From earth, stood in the door. I heard
Sweet music, sweet with earth and sweet with heaven.

A cry! it stabbed the silence through,
The wail of one that could not bear his pain;
The tower grew dim, the music died,
The soul swept downward toward the mortal cry.

The white tower faded, and bright shapes
Bowed them upon the silence, gazing down.
"To know that love!" I heard them sigh;
"To know that love whose might is more than ours!"

AUTUMN RAIN

I

NOW are the autumn hours
Weeping on the flowers:
"The joy so dear, to-day,
To-morrow drops away."
Over and over in the rain, —
"The rose, it comes, it goes again";
Over and over in the rain, —
"Love's rose, it comes, it goes again."

II

The lorn hours weep,
The blossoms fall asleep;
But in dreamland never close
The summer ways. Love knows
Them, and it never darkens there,
Nor fades from her bright hair
The rose, the rose.
The lorn hours weep,
The blossoms fall asleep;

But among my dreams I sit,
And all the place is lit
With them and thee. Unknown
To love the lover lone.
Thou knowest it.

THE WAIF

A WAIF there came from ways of grief,
And on my heart 't was lying;
There it trembled like the leaf
When the wind and light are dying.

Faint wail it made, — such dreamers hear
From naked places crying; —
At the fading of the year,
The lone thing fell a-sighing:

"Into the darkness goes the day,
Whither, whither none shall say;
Into the darkness goes the day,
Ever and ever away, away.
Sweet Love, sweet Love,
She came from above;
I fell her feet before
Sweet Love, Oh, sweet!
I fell at her feet;
She went — she comes no more."

THE WILLOW TREE

WHERE blossoms grow,
And winds are low,
And the brook runs lightly by,
There would we be,
Under the willow tree,
My Love and I.

But Fate says "No!"
He hates us so
That it were vain to try;
We shall never be
Under the willow tree,
My Love and I.

But O, one day
We will steal away;
We shall cheat him by and by,
Asleep all sound
Under a sunny mound,
My Love and I.

COME ALONG, DEARY

HILL to valley the happy tune
Singing the green upon the gray!
Sweet and kind, sweet and kind,
Singing and kissing goes the wind.

Singing to me and singing to you;
Come along, Deary! What others do
Never mind, never mind;
Singing and kissing goes the wind.

WHAT I WOULD

I WOULD have a poet's book,
In a shady summer nook,
Where I could around me look,
As a lover may;
I would have a little hand
In my own; would hold it, and —
Hold it, and — you understand.
That would be my way,
All a summer's day.

I would read a fervent page,
Then explain, a very sage,
All about the poet's rage,
As a lover may;
A modest charge were meet for this, —
Just the brief rubific bliss
Of a not-quite-willing kiss.
That would be my way,
All a summer's day.

THE WINGLESS ANGEL

NATURE, aweary of the trees,
The brooks, the bird-songs and the breeze,
Begins to see what she can do
By way of maid's eyes, brown or blue,
And always models with the eyes
A gentle lodge for housing sighs.
Next spins she tresses, turns a throat
Where Love can tuck his sweetest note,
And, by a snow-curve pattern traced,
Works, now, the wonder of a waist.
She shapes, too, certain other things,
And lo, an angel! with the wings
Left off, so it may never fly,
But keep the earth a kind of sky.
Poor man has plied her night and day;
A secret still is Nature's way.
She wills, and works a world of harm
With just a dear unsleevèd arm,
And things too deep to understand
With tingles from a dimpled hand.

LITTLE LOVE FORGETTETH HIS UMBRELLA

(ANACREON.)

LOVE came, one night, his wings all wet,
And put his face against the pane,
And shook his ringlets in the rain;
When soon I heard the sweetest noise,
Made 'twixt the wind, his wings and voice;
I heard it, and I hear it yet.

What could I do but ope the door,
And take him softly from the storm,
And rub his rosy body warm,
And hang to dry the slackened bow
And silver arrows, dripping so,
And make him happy as before?

I wist not what he was about:
He took an arrow dry and clean,
And said, "'T will fly right well, I ween."
Now, here it is, the very dart,
The barbs well fastened in my heart,
Only the feathers sticking out.

THE MERRY ROVER

WHERE the wild bee's work is done,
Where the blossoms, every one,
As on sunny bank they lie,
Turn on him a loving eye,
Summer to summer, over and over,
Comes a merry, merry rover.
By the singing meadow-brook
Loves he long to sit and look,
On his hands his nickèd chin,
Laughing, leaning, looking in.

Summer to summer, over and over,
Comes the merry, merry rover;
While the squirrels frisk and banter,
Ere the changing rabbits canter,
And the leaves begin to wither,
Fall, and flutter hither, thither,
Long as bird and blossom stay,—
He is ever on the way.
Just a little blissful sigh,
Like to that when roses die—
You will hear him, drawing nigh,
By and by, dear, by and by.

THE WAY OF IT

THE wind is awake, pretty leaves, pretty leaves,
Heed not what he says; he deceives, he deceives:
Over and over
To the lowly clover
He has lisped the same love (and forgotten it, too)
He will soon be lisping and pledging to you.

The boy is abroad, pretty maid, pretty maid,
Beware his soft words; I 'm afraid, I 'm afraid:
He has said them before
Times many a score,
Ay, he died for a dozen ere his beard pricked through,
And the very same death he will die for you.

The way of the boy is the way of the wind,
As light as the leaves is dainty maid-kind;
One to deceive,
And one to believe —
That is the way of it, year to year;
But I know you will learn it too late, my dear.

SWALLOW AND FAIRY

ALL the summer will a swallow
Flit the eave-nest out and in;
Day and day together,
Twittering in the sunny weather,
Flits she out and in;
But when the air gets sharp and thin,
And her ways the snowflakes follow,
Where 's the swallow, where 's the swallow?

So, Love's castle has a fairy,
Tripping, tripping, out and in;
Day and day together,
Singing in the sunny weather,
Trips she out and in;
But when the sober days begin,
Wolf to fight, and care to carry,
Where 's the fairy, where 's the fairy?

TO YOUNGSTERS

GOLDEN hair and eyes of blue,
What won't they do, what won't they do?
The gaitered foot, the taper waist —
Be not in haste, be not in haste;
Before your chin grows twenty spear,
My word for 't, youngster, they 'll appear.

Raven hair and eyes of night
Undo the boys (it serves 'em right);
The drooping curl, the downward glance,
They are only waiting for the chance;
They have not failed this thousand year,
Right in the nick, lad, they 'll appear.

Shapely hands and arms of snow,
There 's nothing like them here below;
The cheeks that blush, the lips that smile —
A little while, a little while —
Tease out the sprout, sir, never fear,
Before you know it they 'll be here.

Hands, and hair, and lips, and eyes,
In these the tyro's danger lies;
A touch, a tress, a glance, a sigh,
And then, my boy, good-by — good-by!
God help you, youngster! keep good
cheer;
Coax on your chin to twenty spear.

SHE KNOWS

WHO has done it?
Who has tamed the town,
Got the transient dandies
On their marrows down?
Who rules and fools the summer beaux?
A little dimpled elf,
Amazing safe herself,
She knows, she knows.

Where is one, now,
Put, next summer, two;
She will tame the town, boys,
That 's what she will do.
She 'll find the strings; bring on the beaux!
The little angel sinner,
(The very mischief 's in her,)
She knows, she knows.

LOVE 'S IN TOWN

COLOR in the lilacs,
And singing in the air;
Sweet is for the having,
Plenty and to spare.

Fuzzy are the bushes,
The fields are all a-smile;
Phyllis has a feeling
Life is worth the while;

Dian tests her dimples,
Griselda fetches sighs;
Amaryllis loosens
The lightnings in her eyes;

Roxy knots her ribbons,
Belinda binds her zone;—
Pluck your heart up, Colin!
Philander, hold your own!

Tell it up and down,
Love 's in town!

"SWEET-THING" JANE

WHEN somebody comes a-tripping down,
The winds all at play with her hair and gown;
The very same winds that are just too lazy
To lift a leaf or to swing a daisy, —
Then hold your heart with might and main:
She is crossing the meadow, "Sweet-thing" Jane.

She always chooses the cool of the day,
The way down to Lovetown, that 's her way;
She knows very well (what is well-worth knowing)
There 's only one road — the road she is going;
And she knows she is sweet as a rose in the rain,
And she knows — she will tell you, "Sweet-thing" Jane.

A light will burn in the blue of her eye,
Like the star lit first in the evening sky;
And over her lips will bubble the laughter
The brooks in the sun go running after;
You will see, you will hear, at the gate in the lane,
While slowly it opens to "Sweet-thing" Jane.

You will open it wide, then what will you do?
Why, you will be off for Lovetown, too;
The cool of the day is your lovers' weather,
And all go to Lovetown two together.
You may hold your heart with might and main,
She will have it at last, will "Sweet-thing" Jane.

YOUR DIMPLED DEAR

NOT for thought, your dimpled dear,
Philosophy is not her forte;
But then, to corner her — I fear
You will find it solemn sport.
I have learned, by search somewhat severe,
That she 's extremely queer,
Your dimpled dear.

Ignorant, your dimpled dear,
Of Huxley, Lubbock, and all such,
But I shall be upon my bier
Before I know as much;
Her grandam did n't, at ninety year.
She is extremely queer,
Your dimpled dear.

Dreamy is your dimpled dear,
Divinity itself to rhyme;
But there 's one trouble: that 's as near
As love can ever climb.
Her sympathies get out of gear,
She 's so extremely queer,
Your dimpled dear.

Lonely is your dimpled dear,
She vows her dallying is done;
But — take my word — it will appear
That you are not the one.
Why, she out-veers Miss Vere de Vere,
She 's so exceeding queer,
Your dimpled dear.

Plump and fair, your dimpled dear,
Young, lonely, lovely, innocent;
Oh, will some Œdipus make clear
For what the darling 's meant,
Some Swedenborg please name her sphere;
She 's so egregious queer,
Your dimpled dear!

LUELLA

KATE 'S at her best in an apron,
Jinny 's bewitching by gas,
While Becky, in kitchen or parlor,
Is just the *ne plus* of a lass;
But Katie and Jinny,
With Sadie and Minnie
And Becky and Bella,
Are not — not Luella.

Deb, in the choir of a Sunday,
Sings like a bird in the bough;
Sweet heavens! but Nan in the saddle!
And Betty's a charmer, somehow;
Yet Debby and Nanny
And Betty and Annie
And Edna and Stella,
Are not — not Luella.

Fan is a sylph in a bonnet,
Nett has her dozens undone;
Tall Addy is utter destruction,
And Caddy is certain to stun;

But Fanny and Addy
And Nettie and Caddy
And Hetty and Della,
Are not — not Luella.

Clara — the turn of her ankle;
Dolly — her eyes and her smile!
And where is the match for Semantha
(Unless it be Molly) in style?
But Clara and Dolly
Semantha and Molly
And Esther and Ella,
Are not — not Luella

Heavens, what a reign of all graces!
Each is a queen in her way;
And turning it over and over,
There 's only a word left to say:
Katie and Jinny,
Sadie and Minnie,
Debby and Nanny,
Betty and Annie,
Fanny and Addy,
Nettie and Caddy,
Clara and Dolly,
Semantha and Molly,
Becky and Bella,
Hetty and Della,
Edna and Stella,
Are not — not Luella.

AUTO-DA-FÉ (*To C. W. F.*)

HEIGH-HO, a drowsy, drippy day
Suits well your single gentlemen
Whose locks begin to show the gray.
The grizzly drizzle round my "den,"
'T is sent on purpose, I dare say,
For bachelor's auto-da-fé.
I have the ribboned missives here,
The hearth flames flicker low, but clear,
The spell is on, — the savage spell
To do the burning quickly, well;
So, to it.
Heavens! how old am I?
It seems a hundred year since she
That inked this paper said to me,
"You will be older by and by."

I was a beardless rover then,
The Callow Knight of the Daring Pen,
A-tilting in the lists of air
For every damsel young and fair.
Constance, your knight is older, now;
And you? The darker grows the bough
That brightest wore the morning gold.
As time's own hand let mine be bold, —

Spring up, brave little tongues of fire;
Here I begin the precious pyre.

These? These from merry Margaret.
I never loved her, never; yet
There was a something us between
That keeps a spear of memory green, —
A plucky, strong, unbrothered blade,
Still smilling in its depth of shade.
Well turned the hand that down this page
Drew line to line, each letter clear
And firm from "Jolly John, my dear,"
Far as the awkward word "engage."
"Engage," "engage"! Did I propose?
Here 't is again, right at the close.
Plump Margaret, if this be true,
In those young days what did n't I do?
For shame! — Up, up, good flames! To
you
I toss this costly treasure, too.

There 's nothing like a rainy day
When one would put old loves away.
Ha, this trig bundle, what an air
Of pride about it! And the care
To make a fellow bite the dust:
"Down on your knee, you must, you
must!"

And probably I did go down,
(General prostration seized the town,)
In fact, I know I did; but, then,
Somehow I found my feet again.
A girl 's a girl, a boy 's a fool,
And life, it proves a sorry school. —
Proud queen, cloud-born, serene and high,
To bow low down is not to die;
Long I survive all injury
To aching heart or quaking knee.
But mark! a chance word, here and there,
Says yet you could a little "care."
Imperial Lois, 't is too late. —
These from her highness, gentle grate.

And, now, to Helen. Taste of wine
Is on my lips, the sting of spices;
This dark-eyed marvel was divine,
Even in mundanity's devices.
She traced these pages sharp and fast
As hailstones drive on the winter blast;
Tame passion Helen never knew,
A very hurricane she blew,
Or sat in midst of awful calm.
No other ever sang a psalm
As she could sing it, on occasion;
And hers alone the eyes could play
Such antics after the operation.

Charmer half-wild in heart and mind,
Angel with a dash of the tiger kind,
Love's leopard, — Helen, off and on,
We loved it madly, years agone.
When you were married — Blaze, bright
pyre!
I add these also, fire to fire.

And still the rain, the gray gray rain!
Old Rover's nose is at the pane. —
Rover, you wag your tail in vain;
Not any roving on the day —
The day we put old loves away. —
'Tis almost done; one offering more.
What says the clock? Quarter of four. —
Here's for you, fellow; foul or fair,
Rover, 'tis time we took the air. —
These last, these little yellow scraps,
Good fire, ere long, perhaps — perhaps.

THE KITCHEN CLOCK

KNITTING is the maid o' the kitchen,
Milly,
Doing nothing, sits the chore-boy, Billy:
"Seconds reckoned,
Seconds reckoned,
Every minute,
Sixty in it;
Milly, Billy,
Billy, Milly,
Tick-tock, tock-tick.
Nick-knock, knock-nick.
Knockety-nick, nickety-knock," —
Goes the kitchen clock.

Closer to the fire is rosy Milly,
Every whit as close and cozy, Billy:
"Time is flying,
Worth your trying;
Pretty Milly,
Kiss her, Billy!
Milly, Billy,
Billy, Milly,
Tick-tock, tock-tick,
Now — now, quick — quick!"

Knockety-nick, nickety-knock,"
Goes the kitchen clock.

Something 's happened, very red is Milly,
Billy boy is looking very silly:
" Pretty misses,
Plenty kisses;
Make it twenty,
Take a plenty;
Billy, Milly,
Milly, Billy,
Right-left, left-right,
That 's right, all right,
Knockety-nick, nickety-knock,"—
Goes the kitchen clock.

Weeks gone, still they are sitting, Milly,
Billy;
O, the winter winds are wondrous chilly!
" Winter weather,
Close together;
Wouldn't tarry,
Better marry;
Milly, Billy,
Billy, Milly,
Two, one — one, two,
Don't wait, 't won't do,
Knockety-nick, nickety-knock," —
Goes the kitchen clock.

Winters two have gone, and where is Milly?
Spring has come again, and where is Billy?
"Give me credit,
For I did it;
Treat me kindly,
Mind you wind me;
Mister Billy,
Mistress Milly,
My—O, O—my,
By-by, by-by,
Nickety-knock, cradle rock,"—
Goes the kitchen clock.

OVER THE HILL

WHERE wild flowers were and rippling grass,
I chanced upon a country lass;
"Was never lovelier home," I said.
She hung her head, blushed very red,
Then raised her eyes, as maidens will, —
"My heart, my heart lives over the hill."

So fair she was, and so afraid,
I could not quiz the little maid;
So over hilltop must I ride
To see what could be on the other side.
Her words went, too, as sweet words will, —
"My heart, my heart lives over the hill."

I crossed the hill, looked everywhere,
And asked if a little red heart lived there.
I was sure it did, so I rode along
Till I heard the burden of a song;
Sang the lad o' the mill, as lads they will, —
"My heart, my heart lives over the hill."

The little lass and the miller boy,
The meed of the years, the grief, the joy,
They told it all, that summer day;
However run the hours away,
Bring fortune good or bring it ill,
Heart and hope live over the hill.

AFTER THE COWS

"HIGH time, high time the cows were home;
Will lingerin' Jinny never come?"
The father stroked his grizzly head;
The mother, slowly sewing, said,
"Put one and one together:
The bars slip hard in rainy weather."

"Now, mother, do you mean to say
We've had a smitch o' rain to-day?"
A little quicker passed the thread,
As quietly good mother said,
"Put one and one together:
The cows climb high in sunny weather."

"In rain or shine, will Brindle climb
Too high to come at milkin'-time?"
Good mother smoothed her sewing down:
"When this was my new Sunday gown,
Put lad and lass together,
'T was love, not cows, in any weather."

AT THE HEARTHSIDE.

THE children tucked away,
His hearthside bright and still,
The farmer's frowns are all that say
The day has brought him ill.

The wife — her work is done —
Moves cheerly here and there;
The comforts gather, one by one,
Around the easy chair.

Now, as a sunny brook
Will woo the moody shore,
She nears the gloomy chimney nook;
She hardly ventures more.

If he but lift his face —
The hearth flames quicken, spring;
A yielding smile, his old embrace,
And wife and kettle sing.

THE TRAPPER'S SWEETHEART

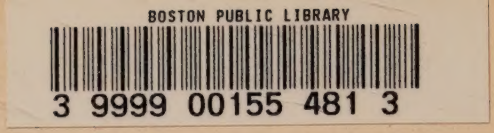
WIDE awake, now, mind your eye,
She will think on 't by and by;
She will see — perhaps — she may,
'Gin to-morrer, not to-day.
"Be true to me,
Furgit," says she,
Jest as it may hit her fancy:
That 's it zackly, that is Nancy.

Take a squirrel up a tree,
Jest so frisky, sir, is she:
Now on this side, now on that,
You must watch her like a cat.
It 's "No," it 's "Yes,
I rather guess," —
Jest as it may tech her fancy:
That 's it zackly, that is Nancy.

You 've seen creeturs sudding lame,
Git too near 'em, an' — they 're game!
Her right over: an inch too near,
Up and off is Nancy dear.
"Yes, Jake," says she,
"Laws sake!" says she,

Jest accordin' to her fancy:
That 's it zackly, that is Nancy.

Whew! a gal 's a cunnin' thing,
You must take 'em on the wing. —
I 'll be goin'; fur, ye see,
Nancy, she 's expectin' me.
I 'll hit or miss her,
It 's quit or kiss her;
I 'm fur facts, while she 's fur fancy:
That 's us *zackly*, — me and Nancy.



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